



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

“To Protect and Serve”

Office of the Commissioner

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Local Shipping Companies Deliver for Child Passenger Safety

U.S. Virgins Islands - Local shipping companies – Crowley on St. Thomas, and Flemings Transport on St. Croix – are joining the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD) and the VI Office of Highway Safety (VIOHS) in providing no cost child car safety restraints to child passengers across the territory.

Through the VIOHS Occupant Protection Program’s Car Seat Loaner Program, car seats and booster seats are provided to child passengers in need at no cost. However, shipping for these bulky devices can be cost prohibitive. Responding to this urgent community need, shipping companies, Crowley and Flemings Transport, answered the agency’s request for sponsorship of shipping and clearance fees for these lifesaving devices. “When we were approached and advised of the exorbitant costs of shipping these car seats to the Virgin Islands, we eagerly agreed to cover all shipping costs,” explained Ruby V. Fleming of Flemings’ Transport. “These car seats which are used to safely transport infants and toddlers are an important function of public safety. Economic obstacles should not be the determining factor as to whether an infant or toddler is safe on our roads.” Flemings’ Transport welcomed the opportunity to assist VIOHS and encourages others to do the same.

“There’s no better investment in our communities than supporting the safety of our children,” said Crowley’s Kishma Vincent, Director of Cargo Operations for the Virgin Islands. “Crowley proudly partnered with the Virgin Islands Police Department and the Office of Highway Safety to help ensure that car seats can be provided to protect the safety of people’s most precious cargo – our infants and kids.”

“We are grateful for the generosity and responsiveness of our community partners, Crowley and Flemings Transport,” beamed VIPD Commissioner, Ray A. Martinez. “The savings realized through their sponsorship will purchase additional seats, which are desperately needed.”

According to data collected through observations conducted by VI Police Department’s Traffic Safety Officers and local Child Passenger Safety Technicians, approximately 73% of the territory’s child passengers are currently transported unrestrained or under restrained (without appropriate child restraints). This data is supported by the 2022 Annual Observational Rear Seat Survey that reported an at-risk rate of over 79% for children under age 12. “Risks taken with child passengers can be observed every day,” noted VIOHS

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Director Daphne O’Neal. “With the generosity of our community partners, we will continue to promote and support child passenger safety. We are asking “the village” to intervene when children are seen riding unsafely. Your concern may save a life.” Seats provided through VIOHS will provide much needed relief and safety for child passengers.

Buckle up, VI! Every trip. Everyone. Every time. For more information on child passenger safety or the VIOHS Car Seat Loaner Program, contact the Virgin Islands Office of Highway Safety through Director O’Neal at daphne.oneal@vipd.vi.gov or Occupant Protection Planner/Coordinator Denise Gomes at denise.gomes@vipd.vi.gov or via telephone at (340) 473-7383.

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